



COMMUNITY VISIONING WORKSHOP

SEPTEMBER 28, 2005



PREPARED BY MARSHWITT ASSOCIATES, P.C.

Summary

Fredericksburg Comprehensive Plan Update Community Visioning Workshop

**September 28, 2005,
James Monroe High School**

Introduction

A comprehensive plan should be based upon a clear articulated vision for a community.

On September 28, 2005, Fredericksburg residents came together at the James Monroe High School to express their ideas and values about the future of their community. Some had an interest in education. Others had interests in the city's natural environment, transportation system and housing opportunities. Economic development was on the minds of many who attended. Most who attended expressed that Fredericksburg was a strong community with a strong sense of place.

The topic of discussion that evening was simple and direct – a vision for the future of their community. City Council had laid the ground work for the evening's discussion. In January of 2005 Council adopted a set of Vision Principles for the community. Seven vision categories were identified by City Council. They were:

1. Sense of Place and Community
2. Education and Culture
3. Diversity
4. Economic Development
5. Natural Environment
6. Community Involvement
7. Public Safety

For each category, multiple vision principles were developed and adopted by Council. These are included at the end of this summary document.

The September 28th workshop participants broke into four small groups to assess the adopted vision principles. Each group was asked to brainstorm and discuss the following question:

After considering the city's adopted vision, are there elements of the vision that should be added, deleted, amended or refined?.. If so, what are they?

A summary of the work of the participants follows. The numbers following many of the statements/ideas reflect a ranking of the participants. The ideas and comments expressed herein will be considered by the Fredericksburg Planning Commission and Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee as the Commission continues with the plan update process.

Summary of Participant Comments
Fredericksburg Comprehensive Plan Visioning Workshop
September 28, 2005

Suggested enhancements to the adopted vision principals

- Promote the significant growth of small businesses and promote a business friendly environment. (15)
- Develop and promote a first-rate transit system; it improves public safety, air quality and pedestrian uses and is a viable option to the automobile; need for a long term, transportation plan. (15)
- Acquire and enhance the riverfront. (10)
- Take the lead in regional cooperation; seek synergy/partnerships/resources; and compatibility between Fredericksburg plan and plans of the University of Mary Washington, Spotsylvania County and Stafford County. (7)
- Proactively enforce our existing codes. (5)
- Revise existing vision principle to public health and safety. (5)
- Preserve local housing stock; explore a broad range of housing opportunities and types. (4)
- Achieve permanent long term riparian protections for the river. (4)
- Have an open mind to the benefits of diversity, existing statement way too short ; should include age and disability characteristics. (4)
- Assess and improve transportation corridors that maximize connectivity and minimize impact on residential areas. (4)
- Community needs a demolition ordinance to limit teardowns. (4)
- Need a commitment to “operationalize” the policies to achieve the vision. (4)
- Need to explore ways to work with the development community. (4)
- We promote exchanges with Frevus, France. (3)
- Fredericksburg is a technology friendly city. (3)
- We are once again a pedestrian oriented city. (3)
- The city’s housing stock is well maintained and there’s pride in ownership. (3)

- Achieve balance between commercial, residential and cultural demands. (3)
- Need to provide more support for teens outside of school. (3)
- An enhanced system of trails and pathways is in place. (2)
- More emphasis is placed on making our primary education system world class. (2)
- Economic development efforts focus on preserving the historic resources. (2)
- Encourage development planners to include green infrastructure into their designs. (2)
- Local education standards are not sacrificed for the lure of tax revenue. (1)
- Our housing market is responsive to all segments of the population/income ranges. (1)
- Underground utilities are encouraged. (1)
- The city is a place of connectivity and cohesion (1)
- Need base retail services for downtown residents. (1)
- Need to improve emergency preparedness. (1)
- Need to define affordable housing.
- Continue to promote efficient government.
- We are cognizant of diversity regardless of race and ethnicity.
- Our public safety is commensurate with our growth.
- New development needs to respect the character of the surrounding neighborhood.
- Initiate an intensive and complete historic and cultural inventory.
- Aid in the upward mobility and opportunities of the homeless population.
- Adopted vision needs new element: quality of life.
- Delete from existing principles “including African American and Hispanic culture”.
- Higher education is missing from existing vision.



RESOLUTION 05-01

ADOPTING THE FREDERICKSBURG CITY COUNCIL VISION STATEMENT

WHEREAS, the Vision Statement sets forth an inspiring, compelling picture of the City Council's preferred future of the City of Fredericksburg in 10 to 20 years; and

WHEREAS, the Vision Principles help drive decisions and projects related to the vision; and

WHEREAS, the City Council desires that the vision reflect the feelings of the general citizenry.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED this 11th day of January 2005, that the Mayor and City Council of the City of Fredericksburg, Virginia, do hereby adopt the attached Vision Statement Document.

Clerk's Certificate

I, the undersigned, certify that I am Clerk of Council of the City of Fredericksburg, Virginia, and that the foregoing is a true copy of Resolution 05-01 duly adopted at a meeting of the City Council held 1/11/05 at which a quorum was present and voted. Given under my hand and the official seal of the City of Fredericksburg, Virginia this 12th day of January 2005.

*Deborah H. Naggs, CMC
Clerk of Council*

FREDERICKSBURG CITY COUNCIL VISION

January 11, 2005

We are united by a deep appreciation of Fredericksburg's extraordinary contribution to the history of our nation. We dedicate ourselves to enhancing our City's livability, sense of community, and prosperity while preserving our natural beauty, heritage, and unique character for generations to come. This is our foundation.

Sense of Place and Community

Preserving our historic character and our neighborhoods is paramount to promoting our sense of place. Creative strategies and enhanced amenities strengthen the neighborhoods and promote interaction among residents. Our high standards and attention to these elements define us as a unique community and ensure the City's continuing appeal.

Education and Culture

Art, culture, and education are the beacons of a civilized society. To this end, we strongly support our local educational institutions, cultural resources, and artistic endeavors. These distinguish and benefit our entire community.

Diversity

We are a city that appreciates our socio-economic, ethnic, and cultural diversity, from which comes different ideas and better solutions. We cultivate an environment in which all citizens participate in the process of governance and enjoy the full benefits of living in Fredericksburg.

Economic Development

The welfare of our City depends upon stable, long-term economic growth whose benefits are broadly distributed among citizens. Compatible economic development and tourism builds upon Fredericksburg's unique strengths. High quality, sustainable employment meets the needs of all our citizens and ensures long-term prosperity.

Natural Environment

A healthy environment is necessary to the welfare of our community. Our citizens enjoy the natural beauty of our surroundings, including the river, our parks and trails. We enjoy

clean air and water. We protect and expand land under our stewardship in its natural state so that future generations can enjoy its benefits.

Community Involvement

Progress comes from open and continuous dialogue. The ultimate success in achieving Fredericksburg's vision depends on the participation of the whole community. Constructive involvement of residents, as well as civic and professional organizations, is actively encouraged and supported.

Public Safety

Public safety is key to a strong and vibrant community. Proactive, well-coordinated planning promotes a safe and secure environment in which our citizens can be productive and enjoy a good quality of life.

FREDERICKSBURG CITY COUNCIL VISION PRINCIPLES

Sense of Place and Community

1. We will seek every opportunity to accurately present the full story of our diverse community and history.
2. We will take a more proactive role in the identification, protection, and interpretation of our historic resources.
3. Open space is important to the health of our community. We will take a greater role in acquiring and maintaining this vital resource.
4. We will enhance existing trails and develop new walkways to better connect our neighborhoods and improve accessibility throughout the City.
5. We will support only compatible development that enhances neighborhoods and preserves their integrity and character.
6. We will use creative strategies to help homebuyers acquire affordable, owner-occupied housing that is consistent with existing neighborhood character.

Education and Culture

1. Quality education requires a substantial commitment of resources to insure that we provide all our children with the best education possible.
2. We will work to assure maximum funding to our local schools from state sources.
3. We will aid our children in developing a sense of pride in their history, culture, schools, community, and, ultimately, in themselves.
4. We will foster opportunities for artistic, cultural, and educational enrichment through partnerships with colleges, museums, libraries, community organizations, and government agencies.

Diversity

1. In order to make sound policy decisions that enjoy the support of the whole community, it is essential that the needs and views of our minority populations be solicited and understood.
2. We will encourage cultural and ethnic events and programs that celebrate the history and contributions of these various groups to our community, including African American and Hispanic cultures.
3. The City Council is cognizant of our socio-economic diversity, a diversity that includes income, culture, education, and way of life. Thus, the City will be a catalyst for improved social, economic, and educational opportunities for all citizens, regardless of race. The City government will serve as a model in this regard.

Economic Development

1. The Comprehensive Plan is an important tool for assuring the long-term economic health and livability of the City and we will adhere to its standards.
2. We will support compatible economic development that is high quality, appropriately scaled, aesthetically pleasing, environmentally sound, and consistent with the unique character of the City.
3. Our economy should be diverse and not overly dependent upon any one business or service sector.
4. We will work closely with regional organizations to find suitable sites and opportunities for compatible development.
5. New development will largely pay its own way to minimize negative impact on City taxpayers.
6. New development must include reasonable and viable transportation plans.
7. We will avoid compromising our high standards for development.
8. We will support and strengthen our existing businesses.
9. We will increase our efforts to promote heritage tourism.
10. We recognize that historic preservation is economic development.

Natural Environment

1. We will make every effort to maintain the quality and health of the Rappahannock River and its tributaries through enhanced protection of our riparian properties.
2. We will improve maintenance of the natural state of our parks and urban riverfront.
3. We will find opportunities to expand greenspace available for the use and enjoyment of the public.
4. We will work with neighboring localities to minimize the impact of growth on our air and water resources.
5. We will protect appropriate natural elements and environmental resources in all future development.

Community Involvement

1. The City will give residents sufficient time and opportunity to provide input in the decision making process.
2. We will insure that the public has convenient access to all available information necessary to participate in the democratic process.
3. We pledge to actively solicit input from residents as well as civic, business, and professional organizations.
4. We will seek to appoint representatives to boards and commissions that represent the diversity of our community.

Public Safety

1. We will identify and use all available resources to insure the highest quality of police and fire protection, as well as emergency response teams.
2. We will work with state and federal authorities to offer a seamless spectrum of hometown security.
3. We will employ an integrated, proactive approach to crime prevention that involves various City departments, as well as civic and neighborhood organizations.